

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20515-6216
One Hundred Ninth Congress

February 23, 2005

The Honorable David M. Walker
Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

We write today to expand on a recent request you received on January 11, 2005 from Representative Louise Slaughter and other members of the Democratic Leadership. While that letter asked you to investigate the illegal use of appropriated money to covertly advocate for seven different programs, we ask that you also investigate whether the Administration violated the ban on prepacked news stories by siphoning print stories to James D. Guckert, also known as "Jeff Gannon."

As you stated in your February 17, 2005 letter to agency and department heads, it is illegal for the Administration to use appropriated money to broadcast or publish propaganda without taking credit for it.¹ According to recent press, the White House itself directly violated this ban when it gave prepacked print stories to Mr. Guckert, which he reprinted wholesale without disclosing that the Administration authored it. As mentioned in your letter, you have already ruled that agencies authoring newspaper articles and op-ed pieces to be published as a reporter's original work clearly violates this ban. This is precisely what transpired between the White House and Mr. Guckert.

¹Letter from David M. Walker, Comptroller General to Heads of Departments, Agencies and Others Concerned, Feb. 17, 2005 (B-304272), *available at* <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/appro/302710.pdf>.

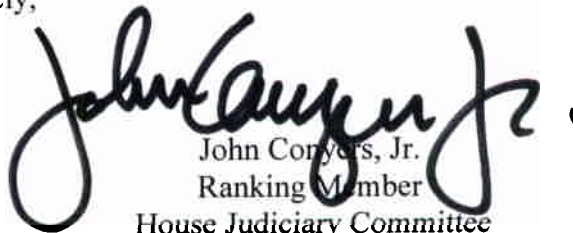
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I look forward to hearing whether you will be incorporating Mr. Guckert's and the White House's propaganda efforts into any investigations you will be conducting. Please contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Louise M. Slaughter in black ink.

Louise Slaughter
Ranking Member
House Rules Committee

Handwritten signature of John Conyers, Jr. in black ink.

John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
House Judiciary Committee